

Message Text

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FOR HARTMAN

DPET PASS ATHENS AND NICOSIA AS DESIRED

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1 IMPDET

TAGS: MARR, MASS, PFOR, TU, GR

SUBJ: TURKISH REACTION TO KISSINGER-BITSIOS APRI 15

PUBLIC EXCHANGE IN WASHINGTON

REF: STAE 090620, STATE 090621, STATE 090622, STATE 090619

1. I DELIVERED THE TEXT OF THE SECRETARY'S LETTER TO FONMIN CAGLAYANGIL TOGETHER WITH THE EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS, AND THE AGREED LIST OF PRINCIPLES GOVERNING U.S.-GREEK DEFENSE COOPERATION (REFTELS) TO MFA SEC GEN ELEKDAG MID-DAY APRIL 15. FONMIN CAGLAYANGIL WAS ATTENDING A CABINET MEETING AT THE TIME BUT I WAS ABLE TO CATCH HIM JUST BEFORE TO TEL HIM THAT I WOULD BE GETTING THESE MESSAGES TO HIM (VIA ELEKDAY) SOONEST.

2. IN ADDITION TO DELIVERING ABOVE-MENTIONED TEXTS TO ELEKDAG, I ALSO TOLD HIM OF THE SEPARATE EXCHANGE BETWEEN CONGRESSMAN HAMILTON AND THE SECRETARY AND GAVE HIM COPIES OF THIS AS WELL.

3. ELEKDAG WENT OVER ALL THE DOCUMENTS LINE-BY-LINE AND WITH GREAT CARE. HIS REACTION TO MOST PORTIONS OF THE DOCUMENTS, HOWEVER, WAS MUTED, PRIMARILY BECAUSE HIS
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ATTENTION WAS SO OVERWHELMINGLY CAUGHT BY SENTENCES IN

SECRETARY'S LETTER TO BITSIOS WHICH READ:

"IN THIS REGARD I SHOULD LIKE TO REITERATE OUR CONVICTION THAT THESE DISPUTES MUST BE SETTLED THROUGH PEACEFUL PROCEDURES AND THAT EACH SIDE SHOULD AVOID PROVOCATIVE ACTIONS. WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY STATED OUR BELIEF THAT NEITHER SIDE SHOULD SEEK A MILITARY SOLUTION TO THESE DISPUTES. THIS REMAINS UNITED STATES POLICY. THEREFORE THE UNITED STATES WOULD ACTIVELY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY OPPOSE EITHER SIDE'S SEEKING A MILITARY SOLUTION AND WILL MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT TO PREVENT SUCH A COURSE OF ACTION."

4. THROUGHOUT OUR TWO-HOUR CONVERSATION, ELEKDAY RETURNED AGAIN AND AGAIN TO THIS LANGUAGE (ESPECIALLY TO ITS LAST SENTENCE, ARGUING THAT WHAT THE GREEKS ARE UP TO IS TO GET, THROUGH THIS LANGUAGE, WHAT IS IN EFFECT A US GUARANTEE OF GREEK TERRITORY AS A PRELUDE TO ANNOUNCING AN EXTENSION OF ITS TERRITORIAL WATERS TO 12 MILES. EXPRESSING INCREASING CONCERN REGARDING THE ABOVE WORDING ON EACH OCCASION THAT HE TURNED BACK TO IT, HE PREDICTED THAT IT WILL CAUSE MOST UNFORTUNATE PRESS SPECULATION AND ENORMOUS DOMESTIC POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES IN TURKEY. HE ALSO REPEATEDLY AND VEHEMENTLY INSISTED THAT THIS LANGUAGE REPRESENTED AN ALTERATION AND AN EXTENSION OF THE US POSITION.

5. I ARGUED THAT IT WAS NOT REPEAT NOT AN ALTERATION IN OUR POSITION AND OBVIOUSLY NOT REPEAT NOT A TERRITORIAL GUARANTEE. DID ANYBODY IN TURKEY REALLY THINK, I ASKED, THAT WE WOULD NOT " ACTIVELY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY OPPOSE EITHER SIDE'S SEEKING A MILITARY SOLUTION," OR THAT WE WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT "MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT TO PREVENT SUCH A COURSE OF ACTION." MOREOVER, EVERYTIME ELEKDAG CAME BACK TO THIS POINT IN OUR CONVERSATION, I REITERATED THE LAST SENTENCE OF STATE 90621, NAMELY THAT US POLICIES TOWARDS THE REGION HAVE NOT CHANGED AND THAT BITSIOS HAS BEEN TOLD THIS DURING CURRENT WASHINGTON DISCUSSIONS. ELEKDAG SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT WE WOULD, IN FACT, BE VERY MUCH OPPOSED TO A MILITARY SOLUTION IN THE AEGEAN AND WOULD, OF COURSE, MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT TO PREVENT IT. NEVERTHELESS, HE ARGUED,

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THIS NEW WORDING WENT WELL BEYOND WHAT THE SECRETARY HAD SAID PUBLICLY BEFORE, AND APPEARING AS IT DOES IN A LETTER TO A GREEK FOUNDMAN COULD CLEARLY BE TAKEN IN BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY AS A GREEK TERRITORIAL GUARANTEE AND AN INVITATION TO GREEK AGGRESSIVENESS WITH RESPECT TO THE EXTENSION OF TERRITORIAL WATERS.

6. I POINTED OUT THAT REGARDLESS OF WHOM THE

LANGUAGE WAS ADDRESSED TO, IT SPOKE OF BOTH SIDES
ABSTAINING FROM PROVOCATIVE ACTION AND MOREOVER MADE IT
CLEAR WE WOULD OPPOSE MILITARY ACTION ON THE PART OF EITHER
PARTY. I SAID THAT IF IN THE WAKE OF PUBLICATION OF THIS
EVEN-HANDED DOCUMENT, THE TURKS REACTED AS VIOLENTLY AND
PUBLICLY AS HE WAS PREDICTING TO ME--WHILE THE GREEKS
HAD AN AFFIRMATIVE REACTION TO IT--THIS WOULD BE VER
DAMAGING TO THE TURKS. THE INEVITABLE QUESTION THAT
WOULD FOLLOW IN AMERICAN AND WESTERN PUBLIC OPINION WAS
"WHAT WERE THE TURKS PLANNING?"

7. ELEKDAG SAID THAT WHATEVER THE LOGIC OF MY REMARKS, I
COULD TAKE IT FROM HIM THAT THIS LANGUAGE WAS GOING TO CAUSE
A DOMESTIC STORM IN TURKEY AND HIS CONCERN WAS SUCH THAT
HE WAS GOING IMMEDIATELY TO INTERRUPT THE FOMIN IN HIS
CABINET MEETING. IN THE MEANTIME, HOWEVER, HE ASKED
THAT I GET OFF A HIGHEST PRIORITY MESSAGE TO WASHINGTON WITH
A REQUEST THAT THIS WORDING BE EITHER DELETED OR
MODIFIED OR MORE EARLY REFLECT WHAT WE HAVE PUBLICLY
SAID ON EARLIER OCCASIONS. I SAID I WOULD AT ONCE REPORT
THE VIEWS HE HAD EXPRESSED. I ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT I
THOUGHT IT WAS TOO LATE TO CHANGE THE LANGUAGE IN ANY
SIGNIFICANT WAY. MOREOVER, I SAID THERE WOULD BE A
RELUCTANCE TO DO SO BECAUSE WASHINGTON'S ASSESSMENT OF
THE LANGUAGE IN QUESTION WOULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY SIMILAR
TO WHAT I HAD JUST EXPRESSED TO HIM. OUR MEETING THEN
ENDED WITH ELEKDAG REITERATING HIS REQUEST THAT I BRING
HIS COMMENTS IMMEDIATELY TO WASHINGTON'S
ATTENTION AND PREDICTING I WOULD BE HEARING VERY SOON DIRECTLY
FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTER.
MACOBMER

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